The Shakerite

WAAA AAA AHH

AS REALITY TV INCREASINGLY FOCUSES ON PREGNANT TEENAGERS, IS THE MESSAGE ONE OF EDUCATION OR EXPLOITATION? PAGE 6-7

4 May, 2011 • Volume 81 • Issue 7 • Shaker Heights High School • 15911 Aldersyde Drive • Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120

Teen pregnancy popularized

Teen pregnancy is nothing new, but with the rise of shows such as “16 and Pregnant” and “Teen Mom,” is the true of story of teen parenthood being glamorized in the name of reality TV? Check out Page 6-7 for the scoop.

COVER ART BY GRAHAM FINE

What's Inside

Editors' Note

Peace out, Shaker

After seven issues, 72 pages, and what seems like 7,000 hours of overtime in the newsroom, our careers as co-editors in chief have officially come to a close.

Looking back on our tenures as Shakerite editors, we fondly remember the hilarious conversations that bore an entire quote wall of strange phrases and the after school feasts of Guy's Pizza while frantically trying to finish the paper.

Dana Finley

Victoria Fydrych

The Shakerite has provided us with many things: happiness, a strong work ethic, laughter, a sense of responsibility and, OK, massive amounts of stress, but we've found it to be worth our while.

Not only have we gained a superior set of skills that will serve us at future papers and beyond, but we've also forged bonds with the staff that are seldom seen in extra-curricular organizations.

We can't help but look back on the times we've shared with our beloved staff in Room 231 and feel a note of sadness.

Though we both plan to write for our respective universities' newspapers next fall, we know that the experiences that we've had here won't compare to anything else.

As we prepare to leave Shaker Heights High School forever, we're supposed to provide all of you underclassmen with some sage advice that will magically make the hell that is high school a little bit easier to manage.

The truth is that there are no magical instructions. No matter how much we tell you to manage your time or stop procrastinating or plan ahead, you won't. Each of you has to learn those lessons on your own, whether you fail at them first or not.

To be honest, high school is bleak.

Most of it is spent figuring out meaningless problems, dealing with your angst-ridden peers, and trying not to get pummeled during the dodgeball unit in gym.

Sure, there are highlights; the glorious occasion of a snow day, the feeling after walking out of your last final, the success of proving yourself academically, athletically, or both at the same time. But in reality, those rays of sunshine are sporadic and rare, at best.

If there is any advice that we could give you, it would be to savor those moments and attempt to trudge through the rest.

So as you walk the halls during your remaining time here, make the best of your good experiences and ignore the rest: your countdown to graduation will one day be over.

APRIL 2011

Opinion

Remembering what's important

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Slow down, suffer through

"Ohhhhhh? Ignorant Americans! Kentucky Fried Chicken and a Pizza Hut... Ohhhhhhh"

ALEXANDRA WALLACE'S IGNO-RANT

OPINION, PAGE 5

IN LESS THAN THREE MINUTES, A VERY BLONDE FEMALE UCLA STUDENT OFFENDED AN ENTIRE CULTURE. CHECK OUT PAGE 6 FOR OPINION'S CRITICISM.

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MIND YOUR MANNERS

A SNEAK PEEK

THE SPOTLIGHT, PAGE 10

SPOTLIGHT PRESENTS SHAKER'S VERY OWN MUSICAL TRIO, THE POLITE BOYS. THEY SING, THEY PRODUCE, AND THEY ALWAYS USE THEIR MANNERS.

THE SHAKERITE

Volume 81 • Issue 7
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Not all Brits buy the hype

The wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton took place Friday, April 29 at Westminster Abbey in London. Neill Williamson, of Worthing, England visited Shaker last month with the Worthing exchange. Via Facebook, he wrote, "Personally, I could not care any less. If any ordinary person gets married, they do not get all this special treatment."

MEDINA STUDENTS THWART DANCE POLICY

Objecting to Breathalyzer tests and ban on grinding, they create alternate off-campus event

by the #'s

116
SHHS students polled*

74%
attended a SHHS dance

44%
said some kids were drunk

53%
said there was inappropriate dancing

35%
would not attend a dance if breath tests were required

67%
would organize an alternative dance in response to rules

74%
would attend a rival dance created by SHHS students

*Scientific telephone poll of 116 students

COMPILED BY ERIN CULLEN

BY ERIN CULLEN
CAMPUS AND CITY EDITIOR

When someone tells them "no," Medina High School students apparently say, "whatever."

Medina High School banned dirty dancing, implemented a dance dress code and required a sobriety breath test for the 210 students who attended the Feb. 5 Sweethearts Dance. In response to the new rules, a group of students organized a rival dance -- Sweetheart 2.0 -- for the same day and time. Sweetheart 2.0 ultimately surpassed ticket sales for the school-sanctioned dance.

"When a tenth of your entire student body shows up to a dance that had roughly 1,500 kids just one year prior, then something should change," said Medina senior Connor Stout.

Although the Medina student response was novel, the crackdown is not unusual. Shaker administrators made a similar effort to eliminate suggestive dance styles last year. Although the school did not implement sobriety testing, the subject apparently has been discussed. In an email interview, Shaker parent Jane Finley, an after-prom coordinator, stated that attendance actually increased at some area schools after Breathalyzer tests were imposed. She wrote that Shaker was surprised by the number of schools that use Breathalyzer tests, including Solon, Orange, Chagrin Falls and University School.

Junior Logan Davis, head of the Student Council dance committee, cited two reasons why Shaker does not use breath tests at dances. First, Davis stated that the budget could not accommodate the cost of Breathalyzer testing.

Second, she stated, "The administration and Student Council don't want to retreat to something that displays a lack of trust for our student body, even if past events have proven us wrong."

This reason doesn't impress sophomore Jairon Cain. "Shaker has too much pride as the administration goes," he said. "They don't want to recognize that students drink."

In a Shakerite phone poll, 64 percent of students said that they would attend a Shaker dance if the school required a breath test at the entrance.

Chagrin Falls Principal Bill Koons is enthusiastic about his school's use of Breathalyzer tests at its four dances.

"I heartily endorse it," Koons said in a phone interview. "It's absolutely magical, stops all the problems." Koons explained that the looming test gives students an excuse not to drink. He said Chagrin Falls spent about $100 on the Breathalyzer units.

Solon students have accepted the breath tests, according to Tamara Strom, coordinator of communication services for Solon City Schools.

"It's been very painless to our students . . . they understand why we do it -- for their safety," Strom said in a phone interview.

"It does not add a significant amount to the budget," she added.

According to a Plain Dealer report, no problems occurred at the Sweetheart 2.0 dance. Shaker administrators have yet to confront a rival dance, but Assistant Principal Eric Hutchinson approved of the Medina students' decision.

"If it's a safe healthy environment, young people have the right to have good, healthy fun," he said.

How would a rival dance work out at Shaker? Said Cain, "I think it would turn out just like Medina."

Kayliegh Dease•Facebook

STUDENTS AT MEDINA'S alternative Sweetheart dance did not encounter Breathalyzers tests or new administrative policies countering overtly sexual dancing. The alternate dance, held Feb. 5, was well attended and transpired without incident. Use of Breathalyzer tests at dances is increasing among local schools.

Liz Jacob•The Shakerite

TEACHERS DANN PARKER Susie Brown and Suzanne Gyurgyik were among those who attended an anti-SB 5 rally April 14 at Our Lady of Peach Church.

SENATE BILL 5 PASSES FIRST TEST

3-year contract will delay law's impact; referendum drive begins

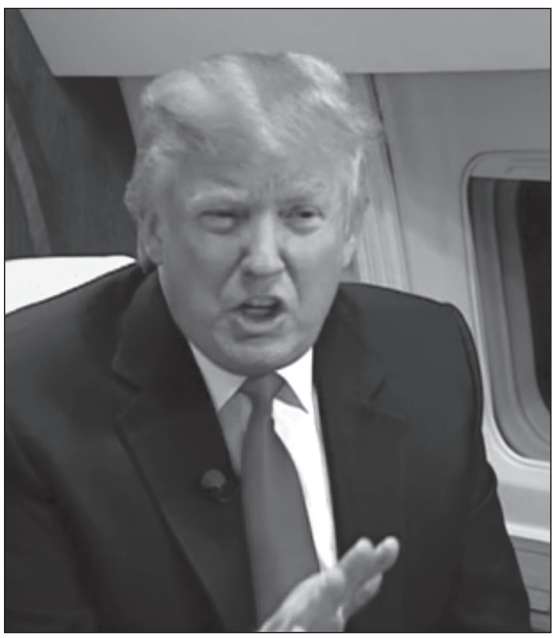
BY SARAH-JANE LORENZO
CAMPUS AND CITY EDITOR

The effects of Senate Bill 5, should it survive a referendum vote, will not reach Shaker for three years.

The Shaker Heights Teachers' Association and the Board of Education approved a three-year contract April 28 that freezes the base teacher salary, suspends for one year pay increases for longevity and increases employee contributions to health care. Because the contract was completed before SB 5 takes effect in July, none of law's collective bargaining restrictions applied. If SB5 does not qualify for the referendum ballot in November, or if it is upheld, SHTA negotiators would be limited to matters of salary for future contracts.

In order to put the bill to a vote, 231,149 signatures of registered Ohio voters must be collected before July 5. The signatures must come from all 88 Ohio counties and must equal 6 percent of those who voted in the last gubernatorial election.

On April 28 more than 400 people in Shaker signed their names to the petition supporting the referendum of Senate Bill five at a signature drive on the front lawn of the High School. Signees must be at least 18 years old and reside in the county indicated on the petition.



Donald Trump speaks about the possibility of running for president on Good Morning America.

7 things to know in the news

1 NEW YORK, NY Although it's not official, multimillionaire and business manager Donald Trump has recently hinted at a presidential run.
"Part of the beauty of me is that I'm very rich," Trump said in an interview with ABC News reporter Ashleigh Benfield on Good Morning America. In the same interview Trump also stated that he is willing to spend $600 million of his own money to fund his campaign. There is some speculation that Trump's hints are simply a publicity stunt to attract attention for Season 11 of "The Apprentice."

2 ABBOTTABAD, PAKISTAN Osama bin Laden, the terrorist behind the 9/11 attacks, was killed in his home by U.S. soldiers May 1. At 11:35 p.m. President Barack Obama spoke to the nation to announce bin Laden's death. At 2 a.m. on May 2, a few hours after the raid, the U.S. military disposed of bin Laden's body in the North Arabian Sea. The unusual burial, for which bin Laden's body was prepared according to Islamic custom, was an effort to prevent his grave from becoming an inspiration to terrorists.

3 TRIPOLI, LIBYA As of April 11, Libyan rebel leaders rejected the peace plans proposed by the African Union. Protestors shouted, "Gaddafi must go" throughout the day, and the message was repeated by the government officials negotiating the plans. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton said, "Gaddafi's forces must pull back from areas it they have taken by force, and the government must resume water, electricity and other essential services and allow humanitarian assistance to reach those who need it."

4 WASHINGTON, DC President Barack Obama announced his bid for re-election April 4 in order to begin raising money for his 2012 campaign. Obama's first presidential campaign spent a record breaking $740.6 million dollars and received donations from more than 3 million individuals.

5 SACRAMENTO, CA California has set the state's alternative energy goal at 33 percent by 2020. Brown wants to convert renewable sources into energy instead of drilling for oil a couple thousand miles away. The Californian renewable energy rate is already 50 percent higher than most of the country. At press time, regular unleaded gasoline was selling for $4.19 a gallon at Shaker area gas stations.

COMPILED BY SARAH SHAW, SARAH JANE LORENZO AND ERIN CULLEN

RECORD TORNADO OUTBREAKS DEVASTATE SOUTHERN STATES

6 TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA Even in a city with as many tornado precautions as Tuscaloosa, no one could have prepared for the recent tornado outbreak.

As of April 28 there have been 654 reports of tornados across the eastern United States, which easily shatters the April 1974 record of 276. These twisters have been most frequent and fatal in Alabama and have racked up a death toll of at least 300, leaving many more people injured and missing. The Red Cross has opened shelters for those who have had their homes destroyed, while power outages continue in many towns affected by the tornadoes.

The University of Alabama was hit badly by one of the April 27 tornadoes. Thus far two student deaths have been confirmed, final exams have been cancelled and graduation postponed until August.

COMPILED BY SARAH-JANE LORENZO

myfoxatlanta.com

RUBBLE SURROUNDS A damaged house after an April 27 tornado in Catoosa, Georgia.

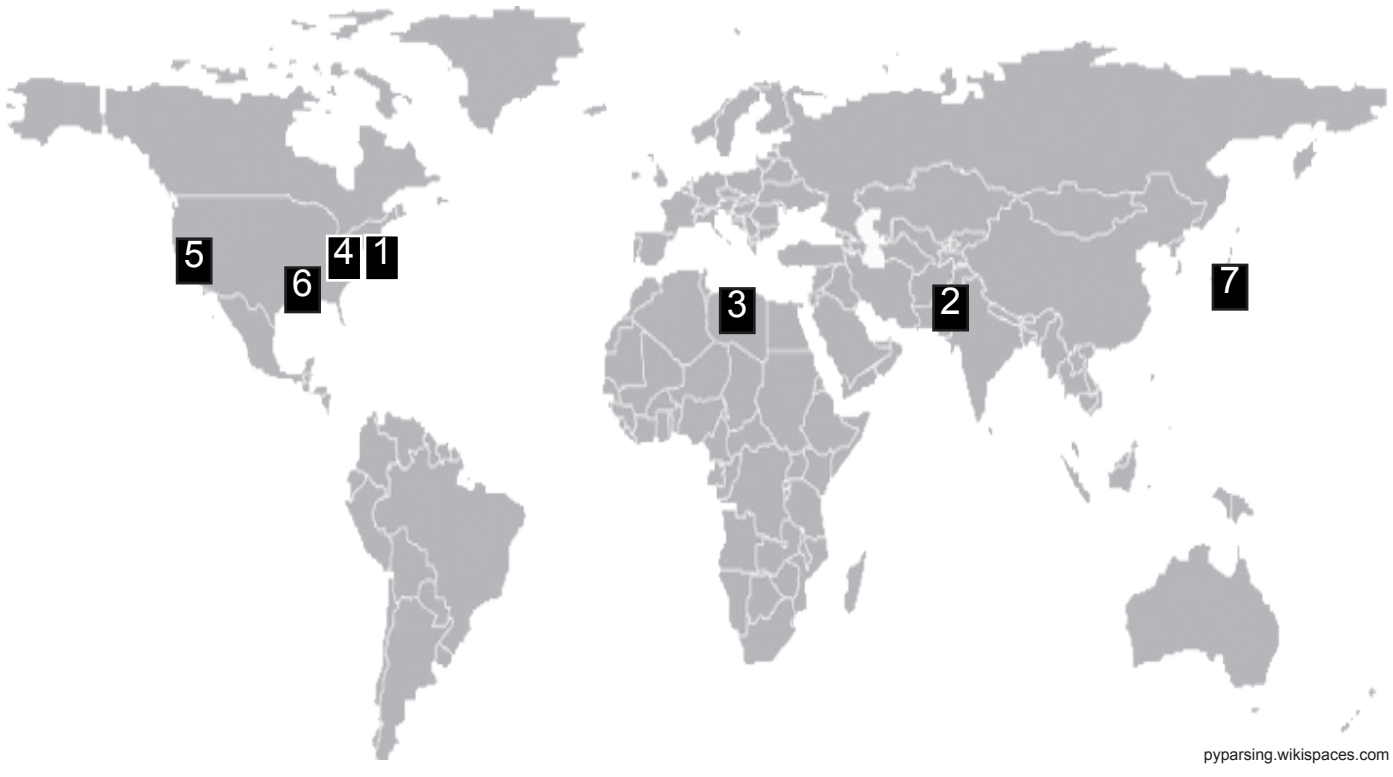
Manichi

A WOMAN PRAYS at a candlelight service for those who were killed in the March 11 earthquake and tsunami..

Aftershock in Japan

7 SENDAI, JAPAN An earthquake aftershock shook Japan April 7, killing two people and injuring 132. At a magnitude of 7.1, the aftershock happened about one month after the devastating 9.0 magnitude earthquake that spawned a tsunami. The aftershock was one of 400 since the March 11 earthquake, and it renewed fears of radiation escaping the nuclear reactors destroyed in the original earthquake. Japanese officials evacuated an area extending 12 miles from the damaged reactors. However, the reactors showed no signs of further damage. Power companies are pumping contaminated water out of the reactors in an effort to begin the cleanup. Similar efforts to clean up a much smaller nuclear accident at the U.S. Three Mile Island nuclear plant lasted for 14 years.

COMPILED BY SARAH-JANE LORENZO



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Opinion

Remembering what's important

When Barack Obama ran for president in 2008, rumors that he is Muslim, his middle name is Mohammed and that he wasn't born in the United States dogged his campaign. Still, an August 2010 CNN poll discovered that only 42 percent of Americans believe that he is a citizen. He released his full birth certificate April 26, spawning rumors that it was a forgery.

Slow down, suffer through

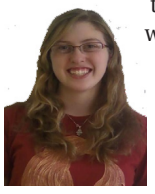
We haven't yet qualified for senioritis, but we're still ready to be done. Tough luck, right?

Maybe not, if Ohio goes the way Utah is heading.

In Utah, burned-out high school students may soon receive relief. Utah state Senator Chris Butters proposed a law to give students the choice to earn all of their high school graduation requirements in only three years. Under the law, which he claims would save the state $60 million, about half of the state's high school students would complete high school in three years.

Three years of high school sounds great – only three years of wandering the hallways, hunching over your backpack and studying endlessly for tests. Well, you may not need to move to Utah to enjoy this privilege.

Ilana Kramer



Rachel Shaw

Apparently not satisfied that Senate Bill 5 is doing enough to damage education in Ohio, Gov. John Kasich suggested eliminating the senior year of college in order to cut back on education costs, and we wouldn't be surprised if Kasich dreamed up the idea to eliminate the senior year of high school as well. After all, doesn't senioritis make that fourth year of high school just a big waste of time?

Admittedly, scrapping a year of high school and a year of college sounds appealing. Still, take a minute to consider what that would really mean. The typical high school freshman is only 14 years old, and the typical college graduate is 22. If a year of high school and year of college were eliminated, students would graduate college at age 20.

Think about the average 20 year old – a sophomore in college. Home base is still your parents' house. You spend Friday nights at frat parties. You might not have chosen your major yet. It's the typical college experience, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. But instead, it's time to find a real job. You're in the real world. Go.

One more thing. When you were 6 years old, your parents probably asked you what you wanted to be when you grew up. You might have said that it was your dream to be a basketball player, or a dancer, or Buzz Lightyear or a bird. But what if you were locked into that choice?

As you grow older and mature, your life goals change. Although a few people know exactly what their future careers will be, most of us don't.

For those of us who have never known whether we want to be doctors, English teachers, lawyers or plumbers, it's scary when guidance counselors start asking what career you may want to pursue.

We can only hope that Ohio doesn't go the same way as Utah. We have no evidence that a three-year high school plan is in play, and we hope it won't be. As much as we complain about high school, we don't want to be out in the world at age 20. We need to put high school into perspective. It's a tired cliché, but be careful what you wish for – it just might come true.

Brian Benton•The Shakerite

ALEXANDRA WALLACE'S IGNO-RANT

Ignorant" is a word that we toss around all the time. But we rarely see an example of what can only be described as true ignorance.

Alexandra Wallace, a former junior at University of California, Los Angeles, posted a rant on YouTube March 11, a demeaning tirade against students who talk on the phone in the library. In the video, titled "Asians in the Library," Wallace identified UCLA's Asian population as the main perpetrators. During the video, Wallace picks up an imaginary phone and says, "Ohhhh! Ching chong, ling long, ting tong!" in a juvenile and despicable imitation of an Asian speaker.

Wallace did acknowledge that the students were probably using their phones to check on their relatives' wellbeing after the tsunami and earthquake, which hit Japan a few hours before she posted her video. She insisted, however, that they should take their conversations outside.

To see Wallace's rant on Youtube
http://tinyurl.com/46ol6ql

To see Jimmy Wong's response
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zulEMWj3sVA

We talk a lot about the extent of free speech, and from a purely legal standpoint, Wallace's action is completely within her rights. That said, she seemingly failed to consider the consequences of her speech.

Wallace's video quickly went viral, accumulating more than 5 million views. When she began to receive death threats and her personal information was splattered across the Internet, she took down the video.

But the damage was done, and it's permanent; it is still easy to find copies of the video on YouTube, even though the original has disappeared.

Wallace issued an apology letter through a spokesman March 14 that began, "In an attempt to produce a humorous YouTube video, I have offended the UCLA community and the entire Asian culture."

She went on to apologize for her insensitive video, especially considering the disaster in Japan.

Wallace blatantly stated, "I made a mistake," and explained that she received death threats, her personal information was published, her family was harassed, and she was ostracized. She announced that she had chosen to leave UCLA, where she was a junior and a political science major.

On March 19, Wallace posted a second apology letter to the Daily Bruin, the UCLA student newspaper, stating, "Clearly the original video posted by me was inappropriate. I cannot explain what possessed me to approach the subject as I did, and if I could undo it, I would. I'd like to offer my apology to the entire UCLA campus. For those who cannot find it within them to accept my apology, I understand."

In her apology letters, Wallace sounds literate and reasonably professional – in other words, like the average college student. And, to be fair, asking people to be quiet in the library is a perfectly legitimate request for civility. So what makes Wallace different?

'rite idea

Making stupid mistakes is part of life, but Wallace's mistake affected not only her and her family, but also insulted the worldwide Asian population. Posting this video permanently sullied her reputation among the 5 million people (and counting) who have seen and will see her life's worst moment online.

It takes a whole lot of ignorance not to realize that what happens on the Internet, stays on the Internet. Wallace learned that lesson personally. Let's hope we don't all have to.

Cover Story

Whether on screen or the cover of a tabloid, teen pregnancy is finding the spotlight. Do these potrayals reflect the reality of teen motherhood?

BY ALYSSE EBERHARD AND GRAHAM FINE
COVER STORY EDITORS

DON'T EXPECT REALITY ON MTV

While it is still a sensitive topic, tabloids and TV shows are not afraid to tackle the complex topic of teen pregnancy these days.

It's not surprising that reality TV eventually began to focus on pregnant teenagers, and many TV programs document their experiences. The MTV show "16 and Pregnant" follows girls throughout their pregnancies, exposing the hardships teenage mothers-to-be face. The shows "Teen Mom" and "Teen Mom 2" follow up with the girls who appear on "16 and Pregnant" as they deal with the first year of motherhood.

"There is no question that these shows are affecting the conversation about teen pregnancy and teen motherhood," Sarah Brown, chief executive of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, told the New York Times. "This generation of teens is very oriented to reality shows in general. They seek them and they believe them. These shows resonate powerfully."

Dr. Margaret Stager, MD and Adolescent Medicine specialist at the Cleveland University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, feels that shows like "16 and Pregnant" and "Teen Mom" are showing young viewers "that teen pregnancy is an option. I think it's important that they realize that the real options are achieved through education."

"I don't recommend these shows for kids," said Stager, "unless it's used for educational discussion. But for entertainment? Never."

Research supports Stager's opinion of the shows as instructive. In a study conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, of 84 teens who watched the TV show "16 and Pregnant," only 15 of them reported no discussion of the show. In a further study comprising 162 teenagers, 93 percent of them agreed with the following statement: "I learned that teen parenthood is harder than I imagined from these episodes."

Reports of compensation and the lure of celebrity have led to questions about whether the shows glamorize pregnancy and inspire some girls to become pregnant in hopes of appearing on TV and the cover of tabloids.

"The media doesn't show all the things that need to be shown to young teens."
junior Jackie Griffin

While MTV does not release the amount of money the girls who appear on the series are paid, according to E! News, Amber Portwood ("Teen Mom 1") revealed in court that MTV paid her $280,000 for appearing on the show -- $140,000 per six-month period that the show airs.

The New York Times reported that the executive producers of "16 and Pregnant," "Teen Mom" and "Teen Mom 2" attended a conference on technology and sex education, where they said that when casting the show, they look for girls who want to share their stories to educate others. But producers must also get agreements from prime participants that will be involved, including parents, boyfriends and medical personnel.

Girls interested in appearing on "16 and Pregnant," apply via email message. The MTV website instructs girls to include their state and city, contact details, a picture and reasons for participating in the show.

Jennifer Del Rio and the father of her two twin boys, Josh Smith, appear on the current season of "16 and Pregnant." An episode that aired last week depicted a domestic dispute between the two parents.

After that altercation, Smith filed a police report that was recently unearthed by the celebrity news site TMZ. In the report, Smith claimed that Del Rio lied about her pregnancy at first and then became pregnant on purpose because she wanted to appear on the show.

According to the report, Smith said of Del Rio, "She wanted so desperately to be on '16 and Pregnant.'"

While the show exposes the struggles that accompany unplanned pregnancies, the show does not provide comprehensive sexual education. Dr. Sari Locker, a sex educator who teaches adolescent psychology at Columbia, told the New York Times, "They show the hardships of teen pregnancy and raising a baby, but they don't provide more meaningful sex education that might help them prevent that pregnancy ."

At Shaker Heights High School, students are required to take one semester of health. Students can also take health online with a tuition fee of $120. The online program is administered through Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, a religious school. The online health program does teach about birth control but, in doing so, continuously stresses the importance that abstinence is the only form of birth control guaranteed to succeed.

For some, shows like "16 and Pregnant" illustrate the difficulty of pregnancies, while for others, they depict that teen pregnancy may bring fame and, if not fortune, some cash. These two conflicting images keep teens talking, questioning whether or not the media is embellishing teen pregnancy to be more desirable than it really is.

Junior Jackie Griffin, 18, who became pregnant as a freshman at 15, feels that the media is glorifying teen pregnancy by limiting what they depict. "Do they show the teen moms pushing out the baby? Do they show how they are sick all the time? Do they show how the moms have to miss days out of school every month?" Griffin wrote in an email interview. "The media doesn't show all the things that need to be shown to young teens."

As the girls from "16 and Pregnant," "Teen Mom," and "Teen Mom 2" continue to grace the covers of People, OK! Weekly and Us Magazine, one can't help but wonder: has teen pregnancy gone from a burden to a business?

TEEN MOMS FACE TOUGH CHOICES

Though the physical changes of pregnancy are obvious, the emotional effects are equally, if not more, significant.

According to Shaker social worker Chris Ruma-Cullen, pregnant teenagers experience serious emotional ramifications. "You're figuring out how you're going to tell your parents, what you're going to do. Just that much is overwhelming," Ruma-Cullen said. The most important and stressful decision, she said, is deciding what to do: parent, place the baby with an adoptive family, or end the pregnancy.

Of the girls Ruma-Cullen counsels, most choose to abort the pregnancy.

However, junior Jackie Griffin, 18, who became pregnant as a freshman at 15, knew that abortion was not for her. "When I first found out I was pregnant, I knew I was going to keep my baby," Griffin stated in an email interview. "[There] was nothing more to it."

Ruma-Cullen facilitates the decision-making process with every pregnant teenager who meets with her, starting with the most essential questions: Do the girl's parents know? Does the father know? If the girl has yet to inform her parents, Ruma-Cullen works with her, laying out her options and supporting the decision to inform parents.

Ruma-Cullen said she has never had a student leave her parents uninformed. However, in certain cases -- when a girl can prove that this news would harm both her and the baby -- a court can intervene. "If a teen girl is pregnant and wants to get an abortion, the judge can give a bypass," Ruma-Cullen said.

Fear of informing parents and friends is common and, sadly, can cause tragic results. Stories of young parents hiding pregnancies and abandoning newborn babies are familiar, and one such outcome resulted from a Shaker student's hidden pregnancy several years ago.

Even if a girl informs her parents and the father, communication could still be difficult. According to Griffin, both the father of Griffin's child and well as her own mother sensed that she was pregnant before she told them. Nevertheless, Griffin was nervous about telling her mother because she had once threatened to put both Griffin and her baby out of the house if she became pregnant. However, about 12 weeks into Griffin's pregnancy, her mother confronted her and asked her if she was pregnant. Griffin stated that her mother was upset but not angry and that throughout her pregnancy, their relationship grew stronger.

As for Griffin's relationship with the baby's father, she wrote that at first, he was opposed to parenting the child. They fought, and the two didn't speak for the rest of Griffin's pregnancy. However, their relationship changed later on. The father "came to the hospital when I was having the baby, and from that day on he has been here," Griffin stated. "We're good friends now, nothing more but friends. He's the father and I'm the mother of our daughter, and that's all it will ever be."

Pregnant teenagers also face significant academic challenges. Those who decide to parent "could be missing an entire semester's worth of school," said guidance counselor Elizabeth Blakeslee-Vokes. Between doctor's appointments and general discomfort, teenagers may be unable to remain academically stable.

Griffin was determined, however, not to let her schoolwork slip. "I was [at school] every day, just not on the days I had to go to the doctors," she stated. "But no matter what, I made sure my work was done." Motherhood requires a new sense of responsibility, and Griffin's maturity and determination is not limited to her schooling. "I felt that if I could lie down to have sex, I could stand up and be a woman and take care of my baby."

Ruma-Cullen cautions pregnant girls about the future consequences in all aspects of their lives. "They just aren't prepared for how challenging it's going to be: emotionally, financially, academically, in all ways. I don't think they're prepared to know how to be a parent," Ruma-Cullen said.

Although Ruma-Cullen provides advice, the final choice is the individual girl's to make. "This is the girl's decision. It's her body, it's her baby."

TEEN PREGNANCY by the numbers

80% of teen pregnancies are unintentional

In a poll*, **70%** of Shaker students said they know someone who has been involved in a teen pregnancy

According to a Rand Corporation study
65% of males have had sex as teenagers
70% of females have had sex as teenagers

750,000 teen pregnancies annually in the U.S. according to Teenpregnancy.org

2.1 million people tuned in to see the premiere of "Teen Mom" on Dec. 8, 2009

*A poll of 174 students from various English classes with a margin of error of .076

Gabe Gordon•The Shakerite

TEACHING FOR TECHNOLOGY

The Twitter-friendly version

Not all elementary schools still teach cursive – it is not considered to be a useful life skill.

College students learn to write effective tweets, but not long research papers.

Boulevard third grade teacher Vanessa Nichols said, "Students don't adapt to cursive writing. They just write any way they want to write."

Technology has rendered cursive obsolete.

President Obama has more than 7 million followers on Twitter. Who reads about him in a newspaper?

Most of you read this outline, but won't read the full story to the right.

Compiled by Ilana Kramer and Rachel Shaw

BY ILANA KRAMER AND RACHEL SHAW
OPINION EDITORS

Quick! Write a cursive capital q.

Don't worry. We can't, either – at least not without a few false starts. For the record, capital q looks a lot like a curly numeral 2. The fact that you probably didn't remember that supports a growing recognition that handwriting, especially cursive, faces extinction by technology.

"There's nowhere to hide." A March 20 New York Times article written by Andy Selsberg, an English teacher at John Jay College, discussed how writing styles have changed as a result of instant updates in the technology age.

Many elementary students are no longer taught cursive (apparently, it's not a useful life skill), but more than that, colleges are moving away from long essays and research papers. A March 20 New York Times column titled "Teaching to the Text Message," discussed the advantages of writing an effective tweet over a long research paper.

We all accept that technology has changed our lives; the 2000s are commonly referred to as the technology age. But it seems as though we haven't realized the extent to which school has changed in response to computers, text messages and Twitter.

Whereas cursive was once a fundamental part of the elementary school curriculum (remember reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic?), nationwide schools have been committing less time to teaching cursive to elementary school students. Ohio no longer mandates that elementary school students learn cursive.

Although Shaker students still learn to write cursive letters, the skill does not transcend grade levels. Vanessa Nichols, a third grade teacher at Boulevard, said, "Students don't adapt to cursive writing. They just write any way they want to write." She continued to say that, past elementary school, cursive is just not applicable in daily life. Maybe because of that, the statement to copy in cursive at the end of the SAT verifying that you are the person who took your test is, for many students, the hardest part of the test.

This move away from teaching cursive is representative of the overwhelming transition from print materials to electronics. Think about your everyday life – instead of signing a check to pay a bill, most people opt to pay online. Toddlers who have just learned that a rattle will make noise when it is shaken have also learned that pushing buttons on a cell phone or an iPod will make new pictures pop up. Children who have not yet learned to read are more computer-literate than their parents. College students who will eventually have to write dissertations are learning how to market a product on eBay or write an effective tweet.

Although it seems ridiculous, it does make sense. President Barack Obama had at press time 7,538,139 followers on Twitter. And let's face it – the average American is more likely to read a 100-character tweet than a 1,000-word New York Times article.

After all, did you actually read this whole story? Chances are, you skimmed it or only read the first and last paragraphs. It's more likely that you read the Twitter-appropriate version to the left of this story. It's faster and gives you a minute to check your Facebook – but you might have missed a few details – like how to write a cursive capital q.

Spotlight

The Polite Boys donate to a good cause

Entrepreneurship Preparatory School is a charter school in Cleveland. E-Prep's website states that the school emphasizes individual educational growth, resulting in above average proficiency test scores, graduation, and acceptance to a four-year college or university. Vocalist Andrew Cristal's father is on the school's board of directors. Buy their mixtape to donate to E-Prep. Visit www.eprepschool.org for more information.

SENIOR TOMMY MARX'S forceful kick resulted in a grand slam during Kick-It April 16. Marx's team, the Teen Titans, defeated Football Team, a squad comprising football players. The event raised $4100.

Daniel Levin

RAISING FUNDS TO COMBAT CANCER, SHAKER STUDENTS

KICK IT!

BY SARAH SHAW
STAFF REPORTER

It's rare that something as trivial as a pre-prom manicure can inspire 150 people to battle cancer.

Junior Claire Levin was first inspired to raise funds for cancer while getting her nails done for last year's prom. She and senior Ellen Holcomb started talking to the woman getting her nails done across from them, Lisa Cencula.

"She [Cencula] turned out to be the director of marketing at Flashes of Hope," stated Levin. Cencula brought up the fact that Flashes of Hope was a parent organization of Kick-It, a national organization that works to fight cancer.

Kick-It has been in effect since 10 year old Quinn Clarke of Cleveland was diagnosed with cancer for the second time. He loves kickball, and founded the organization to "kick cancer out of kids' lives." Both Kick-It and Flashes of Hope raise money for pediatric cancer research, and the money raised for Kick-It is donated to the Children's Oncology Group, which is dedicated to further the research for the cure for cancer.

Cancer in children affects thousands of families per year. Thirty-six children are diagnosed per day, and 40,000 treatments are undergone per year.

At Shaker, Levin and junior Nora O'Connell organized a Kick-It kickball tournament, held on April 16, on the high school football field. The event was held in the North Gym due to rain. The fundraising goal was $3,000, to be achieved through the $5 registration fee as well as other donations. With the help of a $1000 anonymous donation, as of the date of Kick-It, $4100 was raised.

Daniel Levin

SENIOR DAVID NEARY motivates his Teen Titans teammates, who won Shaker's Kick-It tournament.

Students are not the only donation source for the Kick-It tournament. California Pizza Kitchen donated 20 percent of the bill to Kick-It if you showed them a flier that was passed out at school, raising $463 for Kick-It. "Quinn came out to the fundraiser at California Pizza Kitchen," Levin said, "I felt like I had just seen a celebrity. I couldn't even form words until he passed. Seeing Quinn made all of our efforts real and worthwhile."

During lunch periods, Levin, O'Connell and other volunteers organized a bake sale as well as a "Kick-It Jug" where donations were collected.

Levin and O'Connell went to volunteer for the organization making kits and putting air in kick balls for scheduled tournaments. "The atmosphere was a room full of passionate women who dedicated their careers to fight pediatric cancer," said O'Connell, "Their open arms made us feel comfortable right away. We came back to volunteer several times, however our busy schedules did not permit us to pay as many visits as we would have liked." The volunteer experience prompted Levin and O'Connell to organize the Shaker kickball game.

To organize the Shaker Kick-It event, Levin and O'Connell enlisted IB CAS coordinator Elizabeth Plautz to be the adviser. The girls had to get the approval of Principal Michael Griffith as well as meet with Kick-It director, Cathy Welcsh.

"Nora and I loved the idea of holding a tournament because kickball was such a big part of the elementary school day and we missed it," Levin said. However, Levin also said that this is not just a game. It is to raise awareness about pediatric cancer. Additionally, the hours put into the tournament count towards the required International Bachelorette community service hours.

On the Saturday afternoon of April 16, 10 teams of eight to 20 people (a total of 150 people) competed. According to Kick-It director Cathy Welcsh, the school kickball games have been a big hit. They are designed to be as simple as a walkathon or 5k, and the process is similar. "Participants ask friends and family to sponsor them through an online campaign, pledge forms or through traditional fundraisers like bake sales and T-shirt sales," Welcsh stated.

Sophomore Christian Freer, who played for the Teen Titans, thought the event was a success. "We had a lot of fun playing kick ball, and knowing we were doing it for a good cause made it that much better," Freer said.

Nationally, $268,257 has been raised through 185 kickball games to date. The website also has a shout-out board where people can post comments. One post by Shaker mom Pam Chaney said, "Hey Shaker Heights High School Players! You're going to kick it big time. Thanks for playing and for raising money for this worthy cause."

Ann Marie Kelly

CLOSE SHAVE, GOOD CAUSE

Students and 13 teachers shaved their heads March 18 to raise money to fight pediatric cancer through The St. Baldrick's Foundation. St. Baldrick's is a charity that is dedicated to providing research to find a cure for pediatric cancer, which is one of the top five causes of death among kids.

The act of shaving hair is intended to show solidarity with children who lose their hair during chemotherapy.

"Cancer freaking sucks," senior organizer Ann Marie Kelly said. In February 2010, Kelly was diagnosed with malignant intracranial germinoma, a spreading germ cell in her brain, which caused a brain tumor. She underwent radiation throughout 2010 and is currently in remission.

She and a friend wanted to organize a head-shaving fund-raiser at the high school and asked social studies teacher Paul Kelly for help. Kelly, who is not related to Ann Marie, said that it should be a school-wide event. Eighteen members of Paul Kelly's family have experienced breast cancer, so the cause resonated with him.

Teachers volunteered to shave their heads for a certain price, ranging $20 to $200. Students donated to reach each teacher's goal. Shaker raised $2,200 for the foundation.

TIARA FREEMAN

MIND YOUR MANNERS

• As senior project time rolls around, we hope for signs of creativity. We found some in the musical group The Polite Boys, aka seniors Andrew Cristal, Michael Griffith and Stephen Shapero, are creating a mixtape to raise money for Entrepreneurship Preparatory School. Vocalists Cristal and Shapero and "beats man" Griffith use their lyrics to remind people of the manners they refuse to use.

Ellen Holcomb•The Shakerite

Who came up with the idea for the group?
AC: I think it was my mom. She was always saying, "Andrew, I really like Stephen, and Michael's alright . . . I think that you guys are so polite and that you should start singing songs."
SS: She had a feeling we were musically gifted.

What is the message behind the name? Who thought of it?
AC: No hidden agenda . . .
SS: Polite and in your face.
AC: I like that . . . At the gas station at East and 3rd [in downtown Cleveland], I was throwing out some names to the cashier . . . and The Polite Boys just came up. He liked it.

When did this hobby turn into a more serious approach for a senior project?
SS: We were always pretty serious about the group.
MG: It's been a long time coming.
AC: My mom said, "Either make this your project or leave the house." I really had no other option.

What are everyone's roles in the group?
SS: Michael is the beats man.
AC: It's like a John-Lennon-and-the-other-guy thing . . .
MG: . . . a fusion

What are you hoping to accomplish with the project?
AC: We're sick of rock stars taking advantage of girls; people becoming friends with someone they weren't and not saying, "Nice to meet you"; sneezing and not having someone say, "Bless you." Basically, we're sick of people not being polite.

Do you hope to continue with the group after project ends?
ALL: No.

What experience do you have with writing and producing music?
AC: Well . . . when Stephen and I were young and went to the Harley Davidson store and got matching leather jackets, we knew we needed to be in a group.
MG: Also, Andrew and I took Music Composition, and Stephen and I took AP Music Theory.

What genre would you describe your music as?
SS: New classical club banger-ish.
MG: C-Squared B-Squared.

How do you think of your ideas for lyrics?
AC: How does Van Gogh think of his paintings?
SS: How does Oprah know how to host a talk show? It just comes naturally.

So what's the basic overview of your project?
AC: We're making a mixtape for charity that will be about $5. The money goes to E-Prep, a charter school in Greater Cleveland that my father is on the board of.
SS: At the showcase we'll be selling the mixtapes and have our lyrics printed out for people to read.
MG: We're learning how to make a mixtape and about the beat-making process from an engineer standpoint with John Guggenheim of C-Town Sound Studio off Miles Road.
AC: We don't want to give out the exact location; we have too many fans.

Anything else?
SS: Set the table.
AC: Look out for hit singles like "Quit Playing Board Games with My Heart," "Catch-Her in the Rye Bread," which is probably one of the most emotional tracks for me, and "Set the Table."
MG: Look for us on Facebook under "The Polite Boys."

Compiled by Devin Parry, Ellen Holcomb and Katie Inglis

A SNEAK PEEK

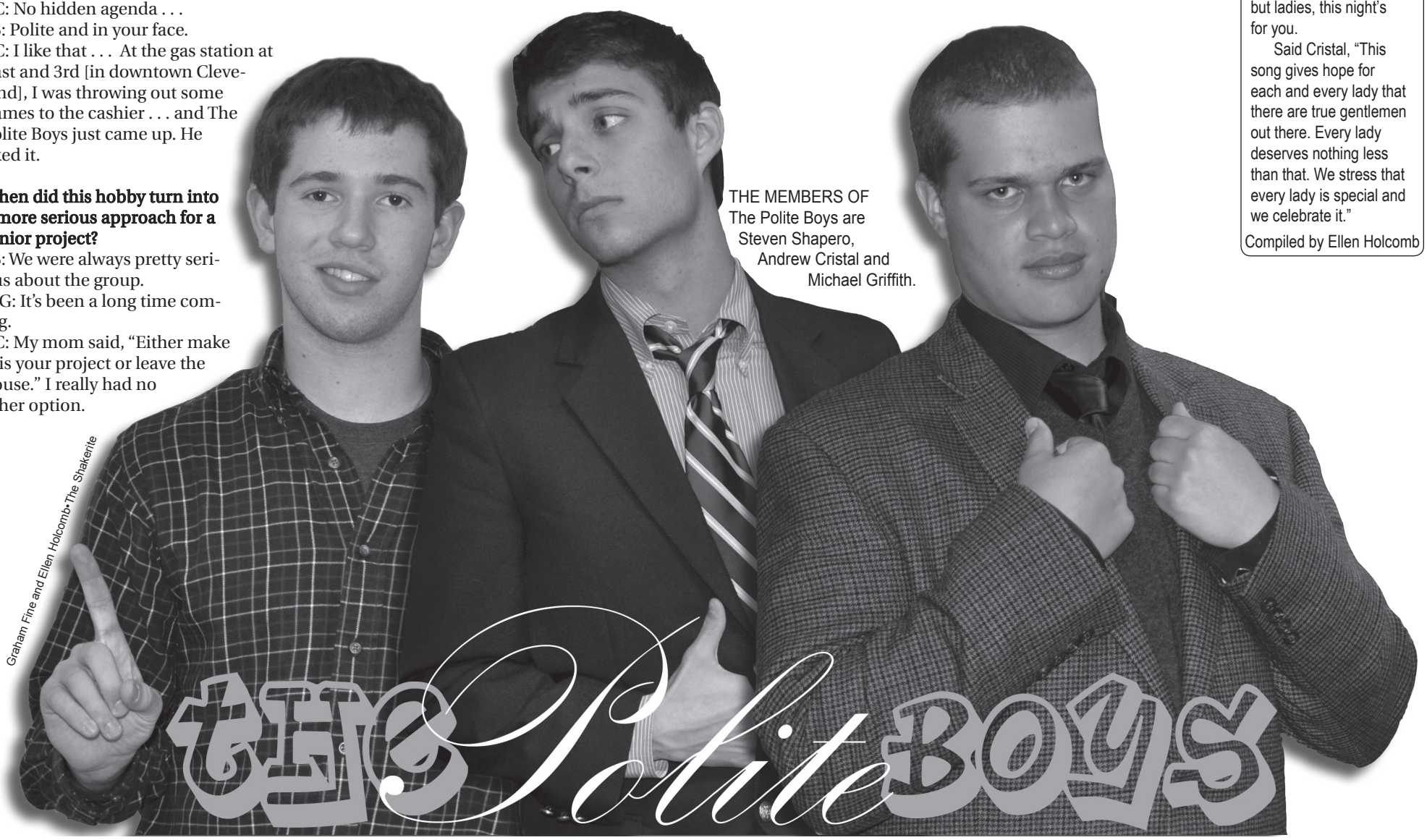
Ellen Holcomb •The Shakerite

The Polite Boys' upcoming mixtape will include "Song for the Ladies," "Quit Playing Board Games with my Heart" and "Catch-Her in the Rye Bread." The Shakerite got a sneak peek at lyrics from "Song for the Ladies."

All the ladies to the dance floor please/with some urgency it's an emergency/I got a fever only ladies can cure./ Over 50? Not old, just mature./Quit teasing me report immediately/ dance on the floor, do this repeatedly/We need all hands on deck like a ship crew/It ain't ladies night, but ladies, this night's for you.

Said Cristal, "This song gives hope for each and every lady that there are true gentlemen out there. Every lady deserves nothing less than that. We stress that every lady is special and we celebrate it."

Compiled by Ellen Holcomb



THE MEMBERS OF The Polite Boys are Steven Shapero, Andrew Cristal and Michael Griffith.

Graham Fine and Ellen Holcomb•The Shakerite

Fractured by the stress of injury

Senior Elijha Owens was diagnosed with a stress fracture of his left shin April 15. Owens holds the Ohio indoor titles for the 110m hurdles and the 400-meter dash and thinks his injury resulted from practicing on the high school's track, which was resurfaced in the spring of 2009. "All I can do now is rest," he said. Owens missed four meets and will return May 4. He will run for Florida A& M University next fall.

VERY BIG VAREJAO SURPRISE

Eric Harris

CLEVELAND CAVALIERS FORWARD Anderson Varejao poses for a picture with students from English teacher Jewel Reed's second period class April 19. One of Reed's students, freshman Malik Long (in the front of the group), won a trip to school with Varejao after entering a contest sponsored by Pepsi. The NBA player, who is 6'11, arrived shortly after second period began and visited Long's class in Room 228 for about 20 minutes. He sat in the classroom armchair and talked to students about the importance of studying foreign language. He posed for pictures with students and autographed pictures for each. Long had met Varejao earlier. "He came to my house, and we rode in a limo to school," Long said. Varejao confirmed that Zydrunas Ilgauskas signed with the Miami Heat before LeBron James did, and that he and James still exchange text messages despite their team rivalry. "I was very shocked. I had no idea he was coming until he walked in," sophomore Charde Calloway said, "I couldn't believe how tall he was!"

WE WANT YOU TO SLEEP ON IT

BY KYRA HALL
RAIDERZONE EDITOR

It was a far cry from candy and cookie dough.

The baseball program hosted its first ever mattress sale April 10.

Through a vendor, the team offered brand new mattresses of all sizes at 30-60 percent discounts. Delivery was available. Players wearing penguin, mattress and Teletubby costumes stood at intersections and displayed signs to coax potential customers to the high school, and throughout the week before the sale, they asked classmates about their sleeping situations.

According to head coach Mike Babinec, Shaker is not the first team to sell bedding.

"The baseball team decided to do the mattress fundraiser based on a recommendation from my assistant coach, who participated in a similar sale at another school," he wrote in an email interview.

Babinec explained that frustration with past fundraisers involving candy and cookies, which require money up front, also influenced the decision.

Babinec hopes that the money earned will help the team buy a new scoreboard, which cost anywhere from $2,000 to $20,000. The team sold 38 mattresses and raised $3,500. But, Babinec said, solidarity was more important than the sales total.

"The fact that we sold 38 mattresses was awesome," he said, "but the fact the entire program worked hard together to promote the sale and work on the day of the sale is just as important in the overall scheme of things."

"The uniqueness of this event was something that drew me to it. It had never been done before, and we hoped the newness of it would create interest."
Head Coach Mike Babinec

Graham Fine•The Shakerite

VARSITY AND JUNIOR Varsity baseball players Zach Findling, Hassan Ware, John Longman and Ryan Walling stand at the intersection of Lee Road and Parkland to promote the mattress sale. Ware, Longman and Walling donned costumes for the effort.

LACROSSE + DUDES = LAX BROS

BY FRANCIS GOINS
RAIDERZONE EDITOR

I do three things all day: eat, sleep, lax."

By definition, senior Kadeem Evans is an epic lax bro.

What are lax bros? They are the pack of guys at the party in their lax pinnies, pastel shorts and snap-backs (hats adjusted by snaps). You usually see lax bros "wheeling biddies" (picking up girls) and showing off their "flow" (hair flowing out of the back of their snap-backs).

Lax bros are bros among men, the "sickest of the sick." The average week of a lax bro comprises chillin', partying, or laxing it up with his fellow lax bros. "Lax bros are about doing what you feel like doin'," said Evans. "Just chill; do whatever."

Wondering how you, too, can be a lax bro? Well, there is both good news and bad news. The good news is that anybody can be a bro. A bro is anybody who likes to chill and party. The bad news is that not just anybody can be a lax bro.

"I know people that act like they're lax bros but aren't lax bros," said Evans. "They end every sentence 'bro,' and I'm like, 'chill out'." The only true way to become a lax bro is to grow up in the lifestyle. "Freshman year I probably wasn't chill. Now, I don't need to impress anybody."

So, to recap: to be a lax bro is to be a master at "chillin," and not letting people tell you what to do. Next, you have to dress the part. A pair of Sperrys, a pair of pastel shorts, and a snap-back should do it. Finally, you cannot only play lacrosse; you have to make it a lifestyle.

Are you a bro?

Quiz Time

1. Lacrosse or lax?
a. It's lacrosse, can't you read?
b. Lax, bro!

2. Do you have flow?
a. Yes
b. No

3. If yes, does it rage?
a.Totally
b. Nah

4. How do you feel about Sperries?
a. Good
b. Awesome
c. Euphoria

5. Where is your spoon?
a. At home
b. In my hand
c. In my locker

6. How do you feel about Senate Bill 5?
a. It's sick, bro
b. Chill out

7. Do you wheel babes?
a. All the time
b. Nah, chill, bro

8. What does it mean to hit cheddar? (extended response)

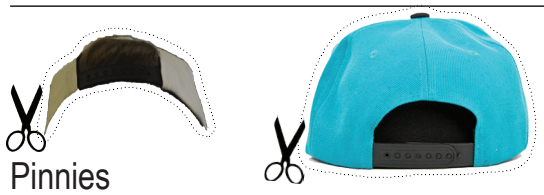
9. Are you opposed to wearing lax pinnies in public?
a. It's completely tasteless
b. never, bro

10. Mid-calf socks are for nerds, right?
a. Absolutely!
b. Never, they're chill

A bro would have answered: 1. b; 2. a; 3. a; 4. c; 5. b; 6. b; 7. a; 8. to hit the orange/yellow (cheddar-colored) bars of a lacrosse goal; 9. b; 10. b

Aspire to lax brodom? Use our Interactive Lax Bro Maker to mix and match a sick look!

Snap-back Hats



Pinnies

Shorts

Shoes

Spoon

IAN ROUND AND ELLEN HOLCOMB